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New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Sadykov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Yemen to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; Mr. Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization; and Mr. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed is joining via video-teleconference from Amman, and Mr. Tedros and Mr. Graziano da Silva are joining via video-teleconference from Geneva.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed (*spoke in Arabic*): The situation in Yemen remains extremely grave. The intensity of the conflict is increasing daily, and the tragic humanitarian situation continues to worsen.

For the third successive year, Yemenis have seen the holy month of Ramadan transformed from a month of tolerance and peace into a month of violence and hopelessness. Yemen has seen an increase in battles of attrition between the parties to the conflict, and the pace of military operations has increased in Hajjah, Ma'rib and Al Jawf governorates. Since 10 June, fighting has also escalated significantly in Taiz and areas to the east of the city. The fighting for control of the presidential palace in the city has intensified in parallel with indiscriminate shelling in residential areas, leading to an increase in the number of dead and injured, and further destruction of the city's remaining civilian infrastructure. There have been numerous casualties in Ma'rib governorate, particularly during the battle for control of Serwah district.

Violence has also continued in Hajjah governorate and the border area between Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including on 22 and 29 June, when rockets landed in the Jizan area of Saudi Arabia. In addition, air strikes have continued to hit numerous locations in the governorates of Sa'dah, Taiz, Ma'rib and Sana'a. Air strikes hit a market in Moshnaq village, in Sa'dah, on 18 June, and Al-Mokha town on 4 July. Both incidents resulted in numerous civilian deaths and injuries, including women and children.

Despite the fact that we have urged the warring parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, the targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure continues; this cannot be tolerated. There must be respect for international legal norms.

On 15 June, an Emirati ship was subjected to a bombardment from the vicinity of Al-Mokha port, threatening maritime security in the Bab Al-Mandab strait. The continued targeting of vessels in the area seriously jeopardizes the provision of much-needed humanitarian and commercial supplies to the most vulnerable Yemenis.

In addition, security continues to be undermined by the activities of extremist groups, including Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. On 7 June, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device targeted the convoy of the Abyan chief of security, killing two of his bodyguards. Later in the month, on 14 June, militants detonated an improvised explosive device at a police station in Dhale governorate, killing the chief of police and wounding several others. Here let me stress, as I have done before, that the longer the conflicts lasts, the more terrorist groups will expand and threaten Yemen's future by controlling more territory.

The humanitarian situation in Yemen is appalling. The people are suffering from war and hunger and from cholera, which has continued to spread during the last few weeks. The country is not suffering from a single emergency, but from a number of complex emergencies that have affected more than 20 million people and whose scale and effect will be felt long after the end of the war.

Approximately 14 million people are food insecure, of whom almost 7 million are at risk of being victims of famine, as my colleagues will indicate in their

respective briefings. Cholera is spreading rapidly and is infecting children and elderly people and other vulnerable groups in many parts of the country. There are now over 300,000 suspected cases of the disease, and more than 1,700 have died in the epidemic. Tens of thousands of health-care workers have not been paid for many months. More than half of the country's health facilities have closed, and supplies of medicine and medical equipment remain severely limited.

The speed and scale of Yemen's cholera outbreak serves to highlight the consequences of a collapsed public-sector system. I would like to praise the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's generous $67 million donation, which has helped to slow the spread of the disease. I call on other donors to provide further contributions as soon as possible.

The non-payment of salaries for health-care workers and other staff in the public sector is an urgent issue. If it is not addressed, the continuation of the status quo will lead to key State institutions ceasing to function. I fully support the joint proposal by the United Nations Development Programme, the World Health Organization and UNICEF to support immediate payments to health-care workers as soon as possible in advance so that health services may be maintained. I call upon Member States to make every effort to support this initiative, as it is important to improving the work of State institutions, stabilize the humanitarian situation and provide basic-service delivery in future.

A World Bank-financed cash-transfer programme is expected to disburse the first quarterly payment to the most vulnerable households across the country in August, to benefit about 8 million Yemenis. My Office has been working continuously with partners to ensure the success of this initiative, with a view to supporting household purchasing power, avoiding widespread destitution, improving the general situation and restoring hope. I hope that the international community will heed this call and support these initiatives.

Over the past year, the United Nations Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and I have called repeatedly for the resumption of commercial flights from and to the Sana'a airport. The absence of commercial flights has placed an unnecessary burden on the population and worsened an already desperate humanitarian situation. I appeal to the coalition and the parties to the conflict to support the United Nations proposal for the resumption of regular flights, especially for individuals requiring medical care, students studying abroad and family reunification.

I continue to work with the parties and encourage them to strive towards the adoption of the agreements I outlined during my previous briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7954). I am planning to invite representatives of Ansar Allah and the General People's Congress to restart discussions on those ideas as soon as possible. In the past few days, I was in direct contact with Ansar Allah, which is cause for optimism. I am grateful for the efforts of the People's Republic of China in playing an instrumental role in that regard.

The proposed agreements focus on the Hudaydah port and the surrounding area. They aim to ensure the continued flow of basic humanitarian supplies and commercial goods through the port and to implement a programme for collecting taxes and other revenues for the purposes of paying salaries and supporting services, rather than underwriting the war. An agreement on the port of Hudaydah should become the basis for a national agreement for the resumption of salary payments nationwide, which should provide some relief to many Yemenis. Undoubtedly, such an agreement will require clear mechanisms for ensuring that all State revenues, whether collected in Hudaydah, Sana'a, Aden or elsewhere, are used in support of the payment of salaries and the reactivation of State institutions in all areas of the country.

The Government of Yemen has reacted positively to these ideas and has agreed to negotiate on the basis of my proposals. In my meetings with President Hadi, he agreed on the need to implement measures to ensure the delivery of humanitarian and commercial supplies and to prevent arms smuggling and the diversion of taxes and other revenues.

I arrived this morning from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where I met Saudi Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. I welcome the commitment by the Saudi leadership to support efforts to bring the parties to agreement on these issues. I will depart for Cairo tomorrow to continue my current work with the Government of Yemen and regional leaders on these ideas.

I also hope to meet soon with the delegations of Ansar Allah and the General People's Congress to discuss the possible agreements on Hudaydah and

salaries as a preliminary step towards a national cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive resolution of the conflict, with a view to restoring peace and stability to Yemen. It is essential that Ansar Allah and the General People's Congress engage with me on these proposals constructively and in good faith if they truly want an end to the war and an improvement in the humanitarian situation.

I reiterate my sincere gratitude to the international community, which has consistently supported my efforts and the proposals that I have put forward to the parties. I recently visited France briefly, and its new Government reiterated its support for the peace process. Regional and international unity is critical if peace and security in Yemen are to be secured.

I commend the courageous efforts of Yemeni civil society, which continues to push for peace in spite of many security challenges. In June, the Yemeni Women's Pact continued to promote a spirit of compromise as well as mechanisms that could put an end to this devastating conflict. I also recently met in Amman with a group of Yemeni youth activists who, while expressing sympathy for the suffering of the Yemeni people, also demonstrate the same commitment and dedication. Yemeni civil-society groups are in constant contact with my team and me. They recognize that only a political solution can end the war and the suffering of the Yemeni people. Their drive and sense of nationalism carries with it a great deal of hope.

I wish that the political leaders would mirror these activists' love of their nation and its people, which I sense with each and every proposal I receive from civil society. These groups are the true voices of Yemen, far removed from personal concerns and considerations. They convey the suffering of the people from the farthest corners of the country.

The political leadership must recognize that the continuation of the war can lead only to more human and physical loss, and complicate crucial questions on the future of Yemen, including the grievances of the south. In that context, the southern question requires a deeply considered solution, and I call on all Yemenis to address it through dialogue and other peaceful means.

Finally, I would like to note that history will not judge kindly those Yemeni leaders who have used the war to increase their influence or profit from public finances, and the patience of the people of Yemen will not last. The people need an alternative to politicians who destroy their country instead of build it. The justifications are not convincing and the excuses are not acceptable, especially since there is still an opportunity to achieve peace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ould Cheikh Ahmed for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: I thank Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed for his briefing, with which I fully align myself.

Millions of Yemeni civilians — women, children and men — continue to be exposed to unfathomable pain and suffering. Cholera and the risk of famine remain acute in all but one of the 23 governorates across the country. In the midst of this, each day millions of people in Yemen are struggling to survive the conflict, the poverty and the end-of-their-tether grind just to survive one day at a time. Seven million people, including 2.3 million malnourished children, of whom 500,000 are severely malnourished, under the age of five, are on the cusp of famine, vulnerable to disease and ultimately at risk of a slow and painful death. Nearly 16 million people do not have access to adequate water, sanitation or hygiene, and more than 320,000 suspected cholera cases have been reported in all of the country's districts bar one. At least 1,740 people already are known to have died from this entirely preventable disease, probably many more in the many very remote areas of Yemen, which we cannot reach.

Yemen is facing critical stoppages in hospitals and a lack of doctors and nurses. The health system has essentially collapsed, with an estimated 55 per cent of facilities closed due to damage, destruction or lack of funds. Approximately 30,000 health-care workers have not been paid in nearly a year, and no funding has been provided to keep basic infrastructure, such as hospitals and water-pumping and sanitation stations, operating. At what point will the parties shoulder their responsibilities to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure — hospitals, medical facilities and schools — and to provide basic services for the population? At what point will those supporting the parties to the conflict take the necessary action — or, perhaps more important, desist from their violent actions? This cholera scandal is entirely man-made by the conflicting parties and those beyond Yemen's borders who are leading, supplying, fighting and perpetuating the fear and the fighting.

Over 120 humanitarian partners in Yemen are delivering coordinated assistance out of five hubs — in Aden, Hudaydah, Ibb, Saada and Sana'a. From January to April, humanitarian partners reached 4.3 million people. However, at a time when the Yemen humanitarian response plan is only 33 per cent funded, that is $688 million out of the $2.1 billion required, humanitarian workers have had to use resources programmed for food security or malnutrition to combat the unprecedented cholera outbreak, which has surged beyond initial estimates. Funding to the appeal is critical to ensure that lifesaving aid reaches all those in need, wherever and whoever they are. Fresh funds are needed to scale up further, pledges made in Geneva at the April conference must be turned into cash now. And the United Nations and its partners must be allowed to use funds flexibly to tackle the multitude of crises the conflict has created. The cholera response alone now needs an additional $250 million, of which only $47 million has been received and is being deployed and used up as we speak.

I repeat my call made last time I briefed the Council six weeks ago (see S/PV.7954). If only I did not have to repeat it. There has been change since then, only, sadly, for the dramatically worse.

First, notwithstanding the World Bank's commitment of $866 million to assist Yemen and the United States lifting of the freeze on access to Yemen's foreign currency reserves, public servants need to be paid immediately, and health facilities need to be reopened and restarted. A failure to do so will result in further preventable deaths. The United Nations and partners cannot replace State functions. There is no time to lose in ensuring that those payments are made.

Secondly, there is a need to ensure the protection of the Yemeni people and critical infrastructure. For as long as military actions continue, all parties must comply with their responsibilities under international humanitarian law and human rights law, and all States must exert their influence to ensure the parties do so. Today they are not doing so, and that must change.

Thirdly, there is a need to ensure that all ports and land routes remain open for both humanitarian and commercial imports in a predictable and stable manner. That includes continuing efforts to avert an attack on Hudaydah, to re-open Sana'a airport and for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to release airspace and getting the paid-for, desperately needed mobile cranes to Hudaydah port, rather than leaving them sitting useless and rotting on the Dubai quayside.

As I have said before, this is a man-made crisis. The sheer scale of the humanitarian suffering of the Yemeni people is a direct result of the conflict and serious violations of international law. Humankind simply cannot continue to lose out to politics. The United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism has all the necessary checks and balances to ensure the flow of commercial goods into the country via Red Sea ports, in particular into Hudaydah. It is, and will be, inhumane and irresponsible for parties to impede the delivery of food and fuel into the country.

The international community must do more — words are insufficient — to ensure that the parties are upholding their obligations under international humanitarian law. The Council has a primary responsibility for this, as well as its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, which is, frankly, patently failing in Yemen. Approximately 20 million people depend on the Council's concrete action to end the conflict. To do that, the Council will have to lean much more heavily and effectively on the parties and those outside Yemen who are leading this policy and action. Just for the sake of reaching all the millions with the cholera vaccines, which are so desperately needed, the people of Yemen need stability so we can reach many of them at all. A failure to do so will render their fate and our — the Council's — ability to intervene useless and hopeless. We should all feel deeply guilty about that. The conflicting parties in Yemen especially should do so, as should those who drive them from outside Yemen. Our — the Council's — joint top common priority should be always to save civilian lives and to protect them — the Yemeni people deserve this as equally as any other citizen of the world, just as any representative around this table or someone cowering in fear somewhere in Sana'a or Taiz in Yemen.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. O'Brien for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ghebreyesus.

Mr. Ghebreyesus: I am grateful for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the health situation in Yemen, where a cholera outbreak of unprecedented scale continues. The outbreak is being driven by conflict, the collapse of basic public services and malnutrition. Two years of conflict have devastated the lives of ordinary people and left nearly 15 million without access to basic

health care. Almost the same number of people do not have regular access to clean water and sanitation. They have no choice but to drink dirty water, thus continuing the cycle of disease.

Cholera flourishes in a weakened health system. We are witnessing the second wave of an outbreak that first started in October 2016 and has led to more than 1,700 deaths, as pointed out earlier by Mr. O'Brien, and more than 300,000 suspected cases in recent months. It has affected 21 of the 23 governorates and 286 of the 333 districts. Almost the entire country is affected. The largest number of cases are in Amanat Al Asimah, Al Hudaydah, Hajjah, Amran and Ibb — those five governorates make up 55 per cent of the total of 300,000 cases. The World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and other partners are working with Yemeni authorities to detect and track the spread of the disease and reach people with medical treatment, safe water and adequate sanitation and hygiene practices. WHO and UNICEF are supporting more than 600 cholera treatment centres and oral-rehydration therapy sites in the most affected districts across the nation, and we plan to open another 500 centres. In addition, our quick-response teams have been trained and deployed. Emergency operation centres have been activated in Sana'a and priority governorates. More than 400 tons of critical lifesaving supplies have been delivered, including intravenous fluids and treatment kits, and more than 5 million people have been supported to access safe water.

At the same time, there is a shortage of doctors and nurses to help treat and care for those who are ill. Some have fled the country, yet many continue to come to work, even though they have not been paid for more than 10 months. WHO and UNICEF are paying incentives, travel costs, overtime and other allowances whenever they can in order to help to get them through this period, but that is not a sustainable solution. Other challenges include the fact that more than 55 per cent of all health facilities are closed or only partially functional. There are no doctors in 49 of the 333 districts. The supply chain is hampered by restrictions on imports and logistics, as well as limited numbers of implementing partners and funding. The ongoing conflict makes the challenge worse, because it is difficult to reach those in need. Consequently, we have four major requests of the Council today.

First of all, we call for an expedited political process to bring an immediate end to the conflict — so that people cannot only survive, but thrive. Secondly, in areas of continuing conflict, we must ensure that civilian infrastructure, such as water, sanitation and health facilities, are always protected, in accordance with international humanitarian law. Thirdly, donors need to not only quickly honour the pledges they made at the high-level event regarding Yemen in April, but also to provide funds for the crisis in a more flexible manner. Ensuring that workers are paid and given incentives to remain at their posts is a critical issue. Those brave professionals need our help so that they can continue to serve their communities. Lastly, we must provide political and financial support for long-term recovery and development. The partnership between the World Bank, UNICEF and WHO on revitalizing the health sector provides a useful model. We need to rebuild the country's health and sanitation systems so that we can prevent and better contain future health risks. We have agreed, with the World Bank, UNICEF and the World Food Programme, to visit Yemen as soon as possible. WHO, UNICEF and partners are doing all they can to save lives and support the health system, but without peace there will be no end to the suffering of the people.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ghebreyesus for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Da Silva.

Mr. Da Silva: I am thankful for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Yemen for the period under review. I will address two specific situations. The first is hunger and the second involves our work in the field with agricultural and livestock issues.

With regard to hunger, as was already mentioned, 17 million people are estimated to be severely food insecure in Yemen, according to an assessment in March, an increase of 20 per cent over the previous assessment in June of last year. We believe that the number has greatly increased since the most recent assessment, in March. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification systems categorizes the level of food insecurity into five phases, with phase 5 being famine. Of the 17 million who fall into phases 3 and 4, 7 million — about 40 per cent — are in phase 4, very close to famine. We have also reported that people are already dying of hunger in many of the areas of Abyan, Taiz, Shabwa and Hajjah governorates, which represent three quarters of the 7 million that are bordering on

famine. The prospects are not good because, unless they receive food aid immediately or cash, those people will experience famine-like conditions — phase 5.

Secondly, I would like to give a broad overview of what is happening in the field. We are seeing ongoing conflict in many important food-producing areas, which makes the movement of food supplies to local markets even more difficult, leading to scarcity and spiralling prices. Crop production last year fell by approximately 40 per cent of what was produced in those areas before the conflict. Because of poor rains, we expect that the harvest will be even lower this year. The prospect for this summer season's production is still very low, owing to the combination of the poor rains and the reduced access to farmlands — as farmers can simply not access their lands. In addition, water scarcity is currently one of the main challenges in Yemen. Moreover, the lack of proper sanitation is leading to an increased risk of disease, not only among human beings but also herds. FAO is particularly worried about the collapse in veterinary services, which in turn is increasing the number of high-impact diseases in the area — ovine rinderpest, brucellosis, goat pox and foot-and-mouth disease, to mention but a few that are transmissible to human beings. Unless we take steps to address the conflict now, we will never truly eradicate hunger in Yemen.

By way of conclusion, we would like to highlight two main points. First, we all have limited funding and, worse, limited assets. We simply cannot act where we are most needed. Secondly, if we do not address the capacity of those in rural areas, who, more or less, account for 70 per cent of the country's population, there will be no prospects for a better future. If we do not have a good season this year because of the lack of rain, we will have even worse results in the future. Let me conclude by saying that we save lives by saving livelihoods. It is very important to protect livelihoods in areas where people live if we want to prevent the situation from becoming worse in the near future.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Da Silva for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed; the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Mr. José Graziano da Silva; the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Stephen O'Brien, for their briefings.

I would especially like to thank you, Sir, for having convened today's briefing.

The tragic situation in Yemen must continue to be the subject of ongoing public scrutiny by the Security Council and by the Members of the Organization. Our most recent presidential statement on this topic was issued on 15 June (S/PRST/2017/7). It is a long statement, which describes the entire situation in Yemen and the opinion of the Security Council on the steps to be taken. Just two days after the statement was issued, actions certainly spoke louder than words and could almost be interpreted as a direct response it. I will now read from a statement provided to us by Mr. McGoldrick, the Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen:

> "On 17 June, at least 22 civilians, including six children, were reported killed and injured in a series of air attacks on a market in Saada governorate, near the border with Saudi Arabia. There were no reported military targets in the proximity of the market at the time of the attack and no warning was issued to civilians in the area".

The statement mentioned air attacks. As far as we know, the so-called Yemeni rebels do not have air assets. That means that the attacks were perpetrated by some other group operating in the region. According to the information we have, Yemeni President Mr. Mansour Hadi exercises no control whatsoever over air operations being carried out in his country. We do not know what type of strategic value a market could have that would justify such an attack. Nonetheless, it is time to demand that those who carry out such barbaric attacks and those who provide logistical support and weaponry immediately cease such actions, which are a violation of international humanitarian law.

We endorse the call to the international community made in August 2016 by Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to establish a mechanism to investigate violations of fundamental rights committed in Yemen. The perpetrators of such gross violations of international humanitarian law must be held accountable for their crimes. The Security Council has all of the

competencies required to establish impartial and transparent mechanisms to investigate the violations of international humanitarian law reported in Yemen and committed by both parties to the conflict.

There is no military solution to the conflict. It is through negotiations and peace talks alone that peace will be restored to the Yemeni people. Nonetheless, the parties are showing no signs of reaching an agreement that would lead to a political solution, without preconditions and in good faith, to end this protracted conflict. Actors must assume that concessions must be made in order to break the deadlock.

More than two years of conflict in Yemen have caused not only a humanitarian disaster and the most serious food insecurity crisis in the world, with millions of people needing food aid daily in order to survive; the violence has also weakened Yemen and has affected the lives of millions of Yemenis.

Our own sensitivity is yet another victim of the tragic events in Yemen. Here at the United Nations, we have become accustomed to creating euphemisms so we talk about food insecurity when we are really describing a complete dearth of food. We talk about people who are food insecure, instead of saying that they do not have food to meet basic daily dietary requirements.

In this brutal war, the lives of people in vulnerable groups, such as women and children, are seriously and adversely affected by ongoing hostilities and the humanitarian crisis. According to recent reports, education and health, which has worsened by an outbreak of cholera, and the nutrition of children are all under threat. Uruguay takes this opportunity to commend and support the work of the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Ms. Virginia Gamba, and awaits her annual report. In that regard, Uruguay trusts that this year, a comprehensive list of all parties that commit serious violations against children in Yemen will be issued. In spite of the calls of the international community, the Yemeni people continue to endure widespread violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

In conclusion, I reiterate Uruguay's support for the work carried out by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and thank him for his tireless efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. At the same time, once again, Uruguay deeply thanks and acknowledges all humanitarian workers and institutions in Yemen for their courageous efforts to assist the millions of victims of a terrible conflict.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed; the Director General of the World Health Organization, Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Mr. José Graziano da Silva; and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Stephen O'Brien for their briefings.

We also thank you, Sir, not only for having convened this meeting, but also for having come up with the format including the relevant experts who have provided briefings on the situation in Yemen, thereby giving us a broad idea of what is happening not only from the humanitarian, food and health perspective, but also with regard to the political situation and the tragedy that the Yemeni people are enduring.

The situation in Yemen remains critical, and the statistics — such as those concerning the cholera outbreak, as described in the latest briefings presented to the Council in May (see S/PV.7954) — have surpassed projections to an alarming extent. According to information published by the International Committee of the Red Cross on 11 July, it is estimated that more than 313,000 people are suspected to be ill with cholera, while to date more than 1,700 people have lost their lives to the disease. That statistic is four times greater than the figure recorded by the World Health Organization (WHO) — 361 persons — for the months of April and May. Even more concerning is the fact that the number of those who have succumbed to cholera in Yemen alone — 1,304 — is greater than the total number of deaths resulting from the disease in the entire world in 2015 , as reported by WHO.

That terrible situation is but one of the many aspects arising from the conflict in Yemen, and it has been exacerbated by the lack of access to water, sanitation and basic services, and, above all, by the precariousness of the availability of medical services to the population — as illustrated by the statistic cited today that only 45 per cent of hospitals are operating while lacking the resources necessary to respond to the tragic situation. Unfortunately, added to that is the

disturbing lack of food; according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 17 million people are living in food insecurity, of whom 7 million — as Mr. Graziano da Silva mentioned — are at risk of famine.

It is important to recall that, according to the 29 June report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the conflict has resulted in approximately 2 million internally displaced persons, while 18.8 million people — the most vulnerable cross-section of the population and at the greatest risk of falling ill from malnutrition — require access to humanitarian assistance. In that regard, we note with great concern that even though the Council expressed its position on the subject in presidential statement S/PRST/2017/7 on 15 June, humanitarian assistance deployed in Yemen continues to be affected by the imposition of restrictions and arbitrary unilateral measures between the parties involved in the conflict. We also continue to be alarmed by the constant threat of aerial attacks on civilian infrastructure, which limits and obstructs access to humanitarian assistance, which the Yemeni population needs.

We reiterate our call on the parties and actors involved in the conflict to comply with and respect the provisions of resolution 2140 (2014) and to make every effort to commit to a sustained dialogue leading to an inclusive, orderly and political transition directed and led by the Yemeni people, which satisfies their legitimate demands and aspirations, while respecting at all times the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Yemen.

In today's briefings, we have heard all of the consequences of the conflict. I believe that it is important for the Security Council to also analyse the causes and the situations that led to the conflict. The representative of Uruguay made several statements with which we fully agree. It important for us to receive reports after investigations pertaining to those responsible for the bombings and those providing weapons to the parties.

Although we can incessantly repeat that there is no military solution to the conflict, the fact that we have said it does not mean that we are going to end the military offensives. Regrettably, this is a war that continues to be passed over in silence. It is not part of the day-to-day reality outside of the Chamber. That fact is not only striking, but also clearly shows the limitations of our work on the Security Council. We hope that, beyond our statements and declarations, we will be able to take a specific action so that, only a few weeks from now, we will not sit down again merely to hear that the situation is deteriorating and the conflict escalating.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I would first like to thank Special Envoy Ould Cheikh Ahmed for his briefing this morning and for his efforts to politically end the conflict in Yemen, which is in a situation going from a very bad — even desperate — situation to an even worse one. I would also like to thank Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Graziano da Silva and Mr. Ghebreyesus for their valuable contributions today. I would like to say to them that we pay tribute to the United Nations and all humanitarian actors present on the ground, who continue to deliver live-saving support to all those in need in what are very challenging circumstances.

This morning's briefings warrant action on several fronts. First, we all know that a political solution is the only way to end the conflict in Yemen. We therefore reiterate our continued support for the Special Envoy and his efforts for a resumed United Nations-led political process and a durable cessation of hostilities. As the Security Council stated in presidential statement S/PRST/2017/7 one month ago, it is time for the parties to resume peace talks and engage constructively and in good faith. As we all know, women's participation in such talks is crucial.

Secondly, as our briefers clearly reminded us today, the humanitarian situation in Yemen has further deteriorated since we last met (see S/PV.7974), and that was only six weeks ago. It is a man-made tragedy, and, as often happens in cases of armed conflict today, the civilian population and children in particular are the main victims. We are horrified by the rapid spread of cholera to all of Yemen's governorates. It has been described as the worst cholera outbreak in the world. When Mr. O'Brien spoke to the Council on 30 May (see S/PV.7954), only a little more than a month ago, he reported 55,000 suspected cases, and it has now surged to over 300,000. That increase is as much as 15,000 to 20,000 per day with more than 1,700 associated deaths in just 75 days.

We also know that Yemen is on the brink of famine. Yemen is the largest food-insecurity emergency in the world, and more than 17 million people — approximately two-thirds of the population — are food insecure, while 6.8 million Yemenis are living just one step away from famine. We therefore need to immediately deliver funds.

We call on donors to deliver on their commitments made at the pledging conference for Yemen held in Geneva on 25 April, which we, the Swedish and Swiss Foreign Ministers, hosted together with the Secretary-General, but even the commitments we and others made in Geneva will not be sufficient to meet the enormous humanitarian needs. We therefore call for additional funding to the United Nations humanitarian response plan for Yemen.

Finally, in addition to more funding, there is an urgent need for greater humanitarian access and full respect for international humanitarian law. We repeat the Council's call on all parties, issued last month in presidential statement S/PRST/2017/7, for safe, rapid, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access and for facilitated access to essential food, fuel and medical supplies throughout the country, in accordance with international humanitarian law. It is important to keep all of Yemen's ports functioning, including Hudaydah port, as a critical lifeline for the humanitarian response.

The parties now need to comply urgently with international humanitarian law and human rights law. We remain concerned about the high number of deaths of civilians and the damage to civilian infrastructure, particularly medical facilities and personnel. Medical facilities are needed not only to give medical care, but also to fight cholera. As the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen stated recently, "we must give hope to millions of Yemenis by showing that the world is not indifferent to their suffering".

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your wise conduct of the work of the Council this month, and to thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak to the Council.

Almost two and a half years since the bloody coup in Yemen — led by Houthi militias allied with our country's former President and supported by Iran, a State that is a sponsor of terrorism around the world — my country is currently dealing with an extremely serious and complex health and humanitarian situation. Today Yemen is making headlines because of the death, poverty and disease that the militias have brought on us since September 2014. The environmental health and humanitarian situation in regions under the control of the coup's leaders has been complicated even further by an outbreak of cholera that has killed hundreds of Yemenis.

Despite the international community's appeals and the intensified efforts of the World Health Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme and the King Salman Center for Humanitarian Aid and Relief, the militias continue to reject cooperation and subjugate our people to dangerous blackmail. They believe that making these health and humanitarian disasters as bad as possible will force the international community to come up with a solution that will enable them to sue for a political compromise.

Today it is more urgent than ever to achieve peace in Yemen, based on the three locally, regionally and internationally agreed-on terms of reference — the Initiative of the Gulf Cooperation Council and its Implementation Mechanism, the national dialogue outcomes and the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2216 (2015). They remain the main drivers of the efforts of the United Nations and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen, all of which the Yemeni Government fully supports with a view to making progress towards peace.

Our Government continues to be ready to make all necessary concessions, however difficult, to achieve the peace that the great and resilient Yemeni people deserve, because we believe that war is the choice of fools and peace the choice of the brave. We therefore stressed in our communiqué of 3 June that we would continue to support the efforts of Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, and when he met with our President in May we emphasized our support for his latest proposals and ideas. They include the withdrawal of militias from Hudaydah governorate, as discussed in last year's peace consultations in Kuwait, and the establishment of a technical committee of economic and financial experts to help the Government establish an appropriate and urgently needed mechanism to pay employee salaries and address the problem of livelihoods in regions controlled by the coup leaders, in order to provide the income needed to cover such expenses. In its presidential statement of 15 June (S/PRST/2017/7), the Security Council stressed its support for the Special Envoy and his recommendations for peace. Unfortunately, however, the Houthi-Saleh coalition has rejected those proposals.

I have outlined the position of the Yemeni Government — its quest for sustainable peace and an end to a war that was never of our choosing, but was imposed on us — to the Council over and over again. The Houthi militias have turned a blind eye to all the options for peace and all the sacrifices and concessions that our President has made in an effort to avoid a foolish war in which the biggest loser is the great Yemeni people. Despite all of this, we will continue to extend our hand and choose the path of a just, comprehensive and peaceful solution based on the terms of reference — one that paves the way for a genuine peace and does not lead to a fool's war, accept blackmail or reward the coup leaders, terrorists and gangs for violating our State's national sovereignty.

The only way to reach a sustainable solution to the crisis and the war is by addressing their root causes. I must emphasize how crucial we consider the current cooperation between our Government and the United Nations and all its agencies in Yemen. I would like to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to all the United Nations workers in Yemen who continue to fulfil their noble humanitarian responsibilities in dealing with the cholera outbreak, despite the desperate conditions. We are expecting an important visit from Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF, and Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, in the next few days.

However, I feel compelled to note the inadequate performance of the Office of the Resident Coordinator, a subject that we have continually brought up in our letters to the Secretariat, most recently in our communiqué of 26 June, which calls the Resident Coordinator's work unprofessional, biased and politicized, ignoring as it does the tragic situation that the militias have caused, particularly in Taiz, which has now been under siege for more than two years, as well as the deaths and displacement of women, children and the elderly in the indiscriminate shelling in June of civilian services and hospital facilities by the Houthi militias.

The Yemeni coalition monitoring human rights violations has documented 917 violations by Houthis, resulting in 187 civilians killed and another 205 injured, as well as 236 kidnapped and 33 who have been the victims of forced disappearance. We continue to document a growing number of children recruited by Houthis, and the Office of the Special Envoy has updated us on those numbers. It is distressing to see the numbers, which grow daily, of children among the victims in Taiz and other regions, and of the disappeared and those who are detained in Houthi prisons. And yet the conscience of the international community has not yet driven it to raise its voice in protest at such violations of human rights, and the deafening silence continues, as if it were normal to consider that international humanitarian law does not apply in Yemen and that the international community does not care about Yemenis.

Under the leadership of President Mansour, the Government of Yemen considers it vital to mobilize international and Arab support in order to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation and the cholera outbreak in every region of Yemen. The challenges that we have been facing exceed our capacity to address them. We therefore call on the international community to provide assistance and devote greater attention to this issue. To date only 33.3 per cent of the United Nations humanitarian response plan for Yemen 2017 has been funded, despite the fact that we are in the second half of the year. I therefore appeal to the human conscience and to all States Members of the United Nations to swiftly cover the remaining requirements of the plan for the current year. We call upon those States that made pledges at the Geneva conference to rapidly fulfil their commitments to the United Nations, so that we can overcome the cholera epidemic and famine in Yemen.

Allow me to express our thanks and appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres, donor countries, the Friends of Yemen, the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Food Programme and other relief agencies in the brotherly United Arab Emirates and Kuwait for swiftly responding to the consequences of the humanitarian situation and the cholera outbreak in Yemen.

In conclusion, I should like to stress once again that a sustainable, effective and genuine solution to the situation in Yemen requires that the reasons for the coup be addressed and national political reconciliation ensured, as well as a return to legitimacy, the restoration of State institutions and the normalization of living conditions through a peace process that puts an end to the hijacking of our State by Tehran-backed militias. This requires also that the international community bring pressure to bear on the Houthis and Mr. Saleh to resume, and genuinely engage in, the dialogue for peace and make concessions for the sake of Yemen.

We appreciate the efforts of the Security Council and the group of 18, and we thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other States of the Arab coalition for their efforts to support legitimacy in Yemen. We call upon all members of the Security Council to continue to make unified efforts to end the Yemeni crisis by taking a firm stance against the masterminds of the coup and to bring greater pressure to bear on them in order to ensure that they comply with all resolutions of international legitimacy and international humanitarian law.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.